

## SKIERS - *Start Preparing NOW*

by: Walter Mady, P.T.

It's already October and skiing enthusiasts are beginning to plan their trips. An unfortunate byproduct of the ski season is the epidemic of knee injuries that occur, especially in those enthusiasts who do not exercise on a regular basis. One part of the solution to avoiding knee injury is by strengthening the muscles around your knees, increasing the endurance of these muscles, and working on coordination.

It may seem a little early to start working on these things but physiology dictates that it takes time to improve these factors. An exercise program for the lower extremities can be devised to increase strength, flexibility, endurance, and coordination. If you are not sure which exercises will help you adequately prepare for skiing and do not know what or how to properly stretch prior to hitting the slopes, my advice to you would be to start now by consulting with a physical therapist/exercise specialist. He/she can design a program to help you achieve your goals and prepare your body for the rigors of skiing.

Remember that, even if you are physically prepared for skiing, injuries to the knee can still occur. It is also advisable to not take unnecessary risks or ski when fatigue is setting in. There is plenty of skiing to be enjoyed if you are not over zealous and take the time to prepare your body!

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